



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 6, 2009

TO: Members of the Code Monitoring Team

FROM: Kelly G. Broughton, Director, Development Services

SUBJECT: Voluntary Accessibility Program Amendments

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The Voluntary Accessibility Program is intended to encourage the voluntary incorporation of accessible design features in new residential development projects. The proposal was developed in concept by the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Accessibility Subcommittee. The goal is to increase the number of accessible housing units in the local housing supply by offering a variety of development incentives to facilitate this type of accessible design.

Residential development projects that are exempt or partially exempt from the CBC accessibility requirements would be eligible for this incentive based program. Any dwelling unit that is voluntarily designed in accordance with this program would be eligible for a floor area ratio bonus. The number of development incentives available to a project would increase in accordance with the number of dwelling units voluntarily designed for accessibility and the type of accessible design features included in the units.

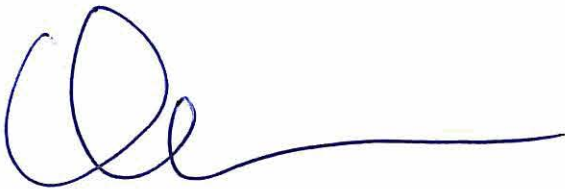
The program would result in two main accessible design types, which have been classified as Tier I and Tier II. Tier I dwelling units would comply with the California Building Code requirements for accessibility (Chapter 11A), with an additional requirement for multi story dwelling units to provide a kitchen on the primary accessible level. These dwelling units would be adaptable to meet the accessibility needs of individual occupants. Tier II dwelling units would comply with a modified set of accessible design standards to create "visitable" units by facilitating access to, and access within, the primary level of a dwelling unit which would include at a minimum a kitchen, a bathroom or half bathroom, and at least one common use room.

One outstanding issue related to the minimum design requirements is whether Tier II "visitable" units should be required to provide a maximum three quarter inch step at the entrance to the dwelling unit in all projects. As proposed, some projects would be eligible for the VAP program even where a portion of the units provide an adaptable entrance with a maximum 4 inch step,

which is of concern to advocates for greater accessibility. Staff is interested in obtaining input from professionals with experience in the residential development industry to understand what obstacles (if any) exist to requiring a maximum three quarter inch step.

With respect to the proposed incentive program, Attachment 1 shows the comparison between the project categories and the number and type of development incentives available. The main categories include projects with one hundred percent of the eligible units designed in accordance with Tier I, one hundred percent of the eligible units designed in accordance with Tier II, or projects with a combination of Tier I and II design. The types of incentives available include a floor area ratio bonus, density bonus, expedited processing, or a choice of incentive from a menu that currently includes use of tandem parking, reduction of parking up to 10 percent, reduction of setback requirements up to 10 percent, increase in lot coverage up to 10 percent, or increase in height up to 10 percent (to accommodate an elevator or special access lift system only). The Code Monitoring Team is encouraged to provide input as to whether the proposed development incentives are appropriate, and whether there are additional incentives that would facilitate this type of accessible residential design.

Staff requests that the Code Monitoring Team review the attached materials related to the proposed Voluntary Accessibility Program and provide a recommendation on the proposed amendments. Additional stakeholder input will be obtained via Technical Advisory Committee and Community Planners Committee meetings, as well as a public review and comment period, prior to the item being scheduled for a public hearing before the Planning Commission or City Council. Please contact Amanda Lee, Senior Planner, at (619) 446-5367 or [ajohnsonlee@sandiego.gov](mailto:ajohnsonlee@sandiego.gov) for additional information.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'K' followed by a long horizontal line.

Kelly G. Broughton  
Director, Development Services

AJL

Attachments:

1. Voluntary Accessibility Program Table
2. Draft Code Language